CLAIMS

1. A system for extracting user selected data from a database comprising:
means for storing configuration data defining how user selected data is to be extracted in response to a user request for data;
means for generating a database query form the user request using the configuration data;
means for extracting data in response to the query;
means for supplying the extracted data to the user;
wherein the database query comprises data defining a measure to be displayed and data defining any dimensions for that measure selected by the user, and the data defining the measure and dimensions comprise a portion of the configuration data.

2. A system according to claim 1 including means for providing a graphical display of the extracted measure data and means for enabling a user to select a dimension associated with that measure to be displayed.

3. A system according to claim 1 or 2 including means to enable a selected dimension of the data to be filtered by one or more user selected attributes within that dimension.

4. A system according to claim 1, 2 or 3 including means to enable data filtered according to selection in one dimension to be filtered by a further selected dimension or attributes thereof.

5. A system according to claim 1 in which the means for generating a database query from the user request generates each query in the same format.

6. A method for extracting user selected data from a database comprising the steps of :
storing configuration data defining how user selected data is to be extracted in response to a user request for data;
generating a database query from a user request using the configuration data;
extracting data in response to the query;
supplying the extracted data to the user;

wherein the database query comprises data defining a measure to be displayed and data defining any dimensions for that measure selected by the user, and the data defining the measure and dimensions comprise a portion of the configuration data.

7. A method according to claim 6 including a step of providing a graphical display of the extracted measure data and a step of displaying a user selected dimension associated with that measure.

8. A method according to claim 6 including the step of filtering a selected dimension via user selected attributes within that dimension.

9. A method according to claim 7 or 8 including the step of filtering data, already filtered according selection in one dimension, by a further selected dimension or attributes thereof.

10. A method according to claim 6 in which the original step of generating a database query in response to the user request generates each query in the same format.

11. A method for supplying a set of chart data from a database to a user in response to a user input comprising the steps of:
storing a number of sets of chart data in a cache memory;
determining whether a user input corresponds to a request for a set of chart data stored in the cache memory; and
supplying a set of chart data from the cache memory in dependence on the result of the determination.

12. A method according to claim 11 in which the stored number of sets of chart data comprise recently accessed sets of chart data.

13. A method according to claim 11 in which the stored sets of chart data comprise frequently accessed chart data.

14. A method according to claim 11 in which the steps storing a number of sets of chart data stores sets of chart data up to a predetermined memory limit.

15. A method according to claim 11 including the step of regenerating one or more of the sets of chart data if the underlying data from the database has changed.

16. A method according to claim 11 including the step of removing the least recently used sets of chart data if the number of sets of chart data stored reaches a predetermined limit.

17. A method according to claim 16 in which the step of removing the least recently used sets of chart data comprises removing more than one set of chart data.

18. A method according to claim 11 in which the step of storing sets of chart data stores only sets of chart data of less than a predetermined size.

19. A method according to claim 11 in which the step of storing sets of chart data stores only sets of chart data the creation of which is considered expensive according to a configurable value.